

MAR 10 1967

Dodd Denies Misusing Campaign Funds

CPYRIGHT

Net Worth Is \$54,000, Senate Told

By CECIL HOLLAND
Star Staff Writer

Sen. Thomas J. Dodd, D-Conn. took the Senate floor today to defend himself against charges of misuse of campaign contributions.

"I have not enriched myself from political office," he said. Dodd gave an accounting of his financial condition and placed his net worth at about \$54,000.

Dodd said he had received a total of \$170,000 from political testimonials held for him and said the bulk of this—\$140,000—went to pay off political debts dating from 1956.

"Exceeded by Cost"

His explanation of the remaining \$30,000 was covered by a statement in which he said that "what was left was far exceeded by the cost of public office over an 8-year period."

Dodd spoke as the Senate Ethics Committee prepared to begin public hearings Monday on the charges that he converted to his own use large sums raised at testimonials for him between 1961 and 1965.

Dodd said he broke his silence for the first time to answer the charges in detail, in advance of the Ethics Committee hearings, because, "I believe that I have over the past year been the victim of perhaps the most vicious instance of trial by press in many years."

"I have maintained silence—at great cost to myself and my family—out of respect for the Senate and in particular out of respect for the select Committee on Standards and Conduct (Ethics Committee) in order that it might be free to conduct its inquiry which I requested—without anything that might be regarded as pressure from me," Dodd said.

Raps Columnists

Dodd said he was replying in detail to the charges that he had used campaign contributions for personal expenses and that he had billed both the government and private organizations for the expenses of some speech-making trips.

He also assailed columnists

Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson for making the charges. And he criticized the Justice Department for not taking action on what he called the theft of many documents from his office—documents on which the charges were based.

"Thanks to the Supreme Court's decision there is protection today for murderers and other common criminals against trial by press," Dodd said. "For a United States senator, however, there is no such protection. I say this from bitter experience."

This was an apparent reference to charges against him by Pearson and Anderson. Dodd has a \$2 million libel suit pending against the two columnists and requested the Senate investigation of the charges after the columns appeared.

"No Hidden Assets"

In saying that he had not enriched himself from public office, Dodd gave this summary of his financial condition:

"One. I own no stocks, bonds, or other securities, nor have I owned any since I came to the Senate.

"Two. I have no hidden assets, such as cash, savings accounts or other business interest of any kind in this country, or any other country.

"Three. By senatorial standards, I have lived modestly. The facts about our home and about our manner of living can be attested to by all those, inside the Senate and outside, who have had occasion to visit Mrs. Dodd and myself at home.

"Four. My net worth is approximately \$54,000."

Dodd said that when he entered the Senate, in 1959, he was about \$150,000 in debt, having campaigned twice for the Senate.

Treated as Nontaxable

He said his friends, knowing of this indebtedness, proposed holding a fund-raising affair as a testimonial to him. He added

that on the advice of counsel, he treated the proceeds as nontaxable gifts. This has been a crucial legal question during the controversy. Dodd said he had received \$170,000 from several testimonials organized in his behalf from 1961 through 1963.

In response to the charge that he had pocketed testimonial money, he said he was presenting his statement of net worth.

As for the charges of double billing, Dodd said that a complete review had been made of all his travel at government expense: and added:

"Since I came to the Senate, I have made in excess of 200 trips, official and unofficial. I have made about 80 trips which were paid by either the United

States government or by private organizations. Out of these 80 trips, seven involved so-called double billing over a period of six years.

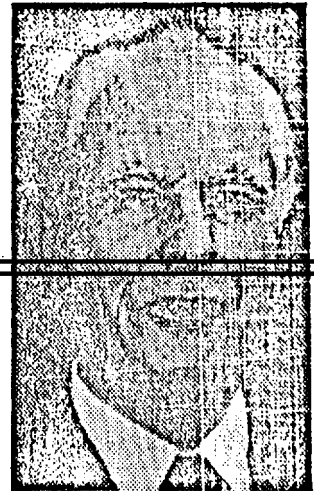
When the review was made, Dodd said, the books revealed that he probably had "one of the most inefficient and sloppy bookkeepers that ever lived."

In a five-year period dating from 1961, Dodd said, he was entitled to bill the Senate for 21 trips to Connecticut, but his office did not bill the Senate for any of them.

"Thus," he added, "I paid for 21 trips for which I never should have paid at all."

Dodd said the bookkeeping errors in his office and the double billings "almost balance each other out."

Deducting the value of the trips to Connecticut from the cost of double billings, he said, he would owe the government a balance of \$384.24.



SEN. THOMAS DODD

"Have No Regrets"

"I have no regrets," Dodd said, "I would do what I have done all over again. I know in my heart I have raised money in an honorable fashion and in good faith."

In listing his net worth, Dodd said his Washington residence had a value of \$75,000, with a mortgage of \$22,095; his North Stonington (Conn.) home a value of \$60,000, with a mortgage of \$43,875.

He said he had \$7,771 in the bank and liabilities in notes payable of \$21,500.

In the way of investments, Dodd listed the cash surrender value of \$80,000 worth of life insurance at \$29,378 and contributions to the Civil Service Retirement annuity plan at \$14,612. The only other asset, his statement said, was a 1965 Mercury valued at \$1,355.

As liabilities, Dodd listed expenses in connection with the Senate investigation of the charges and pending litigation at \$28,089 for legal expenses and \$21,078 for accounting fees and other expenses.

Dodd took the floor soon after the Senate met at noon. He stood at his desk, spoke in a

low voice for most of the time, gestured occasionally and said he was confident he would be vindicated. Only a few senators were on the floor to hear him.

Describing himself as one of "the poorer members" of Congress, he said of the fund-raising dinners:

"To this very moment, not one single donor who has contributed to these functions has ever contended that they thought they were contributing to my campaign.

"I would like any person who came under the mistaken impression that it was for my campaign fund to communicate with me. I will return their money immediately if they were misled. And if my personal means should not prove adequate, I will borrow the money, if necessary, to pay the claims which may be made in response to this statement."

Backstop for Deficit

Dodd said that from the first testimonial dinner in November 1961, he received about \$61,000, using \$48,000 to repay debts. "However, I still owed approximately \$100,000."

In 1963, he said, his friends "organized several testimonials" but he left the funds in the bank as "a backstop for a possible campaign deficit."

When the campaign was over, Dodd said, \$24,000 was repaid to his testimonial bank account and he had a deficit of about \$8,000.

"In 1955," Dodd said, "my friends again sponsored a testimonial to me. And it was not until 1965, when all my campaign bills were paid, that any distribution was made to me. At that time I received approximately \$94,000, of which I used \$81,000 to repay debts.

"It was at this point that I had my head above water for the first time since I entered the Senate."

Dodd dwelt at length on what he described as the "trial by press" to which he had been subjected.

Coverage Called Fair

"Those papers that have generally or frequently supported my views on foreign policy or which have been open-minded about them," he said, "have refrained from passing judgment and have treated me fairly.

"On the other hand, I have noticed that certain papers that have frequently disagreed with my foreign policy views and have considered me too rigid in my opposition to communism have been quick to find me guilty in advance of any hearings or any findings by the Senate Ethics Committee."

Dodd was bitter in his denunciation of Pearson and Anderson and singled out the New York Times for harsh criticism because of a series of

articles it ran on the charges involving double billing.

"Pearson is the Rasputin of American society and Jack Anderson is his jackal," Dodd said. "It is high time that they were brought to book."

Dodd repeated charges against Anderson and some of the senator's former employees with regard to what he described as the rifling of his files.

Employees Listed

He listed the former employees as James Boyd, who was his administrated assistant; Mrs. Marjorie Carpenter, his personal secretary; Michael V. O'Hare, the office manager and the bookkeeper he referred to, and secretary, Terry Golden. All testified at earlier Ethics Committee hearings.

He said Boyd and Mrs. Carpenter "broke into and entered" his office seven times to remove and copy documents for Pearson and Anderson.

WASHINGTON STAR

MAR 10 1967